CONGRATULATING A.B. COMBS LEADERSHIP MAGNET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School, in Raleigh, NC, for being recognized as the top magnet school in the country. On May 16, 2014, A.B. Combs was awarded the prestigious Dr. Ronald P. Simpson School of Merit Excellence Award, which recognizes one school for innovative programming, academic achievement, and promoting diversity. A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School prides themselves on their leadership model program, which is based on Dr. Steven Covey's book ''The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.'' It seeks to educate the whole child, not just academically but socially, emotionally, and culturally.

A.B. Combs has set the standard for magnet schools. Annually, they host an international leadership day, where educators from around the world come to learn from their success. Magnet schools such as A.B. Combs provide parents with expanded options for their child's education—options that will ensure students aren't confined to schools that might not be serving their individual needs. For that reason, I am proud of the success A.B. Combs has achieved as recognized by this award. Congratulations to the staff, parents, students, and the community at A.B. Combs for this award. It is well deserved.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MOYNIHAN REPORT

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks at the Hoover Institution.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MOYNIHAN REPORT

I first met Pat Moynihan four years after he released his explosive report on the circumstances of African-American families in the middle of the civil rights era. I was 28 years old then, and by a stroke of providence, had found myself sitting at a desk in the West Wing of the White House next to Bryce Harlow, President Nixon's first senior staff appointment. My job was answering Mr. Harlow's mail, returning his phone calls, and absorbing his wisdom. It was a perfect PhD in politics and government for a young man.

Downstairs were two real PhD's. At one end of the Hall, Gen. Alexander Haig performed the same sort of services for Henry Kissinger. At the other end was Professor Daniel Patrick Moynihan. By another stroke of Providence, President Nixon had attracted these Harvard professors to the West Wing where they joined one of the most talented and intellectually diverse teams of White House advisers of any first term President of the United States.

I have always thought, by the way, that if the president had paid more attention to his wiser, more broad gauged advisors in the White House—Harlow, Arthur Burns, Kissinger, Moynihan, and cabinet officials George Schultz and Mel Laird—instead of the advance men who guarded access to the Oval Office that there never would have been a Watergate affair.

The White House then was brimming with talent. Jim Keogh, the former editor of TIME, shepherded a quartet of young speechwriters: Bill Safire, Pat Buchanan, Lee Heubner, Ray Price. Liddy Hanford—now Elizabeth Dole—worked in the consumer affairs office.

And Pat himself brought with him from Harvard four of his brightest students: Checker Finn, later the nation's foremost education gadfly; the Rhodes Scholar John Price; Chris DeMuth, later head of American Enterprise Institute; and Dick Blumenthal, now my colleague in the United States Senate.

Steve Hess, Pat's Deputy in 1969, has detailed in his new book, ''The Professor and the President'', how fascinated Nixon was with Moynihan who ''advised the President on what books to read, to whom he should award the Presidential Medal of Freedom and how not to redecorate the Oval Office.'' Moynihan persuaded Nixon to recommend the Family Assistance Plan, a negative income tax that was the forerunner of today's Earned Income Tax Credit.

Looking back 50 years, that the author of such a controversial report could have been hired at all by a president of the United States and then that later this author could have been elected to the U.S. Senate three times from New York suggests the wiliness and courage of this professor with the cheerful soul of an Irish immigrant. Let's just say Pat followed the advice of his favorite character, Tammany Hall boss George Washington Plunkitt, ''I seen my opportunities, and I took 'em.''

Today, 50 years after it was written, the trend Moynihan was detailing—the rise of households led by single mothers—has grown more dramatic and cuts across all racial groups. Today more than four in 10 children in the U.S. are born outside of marriage.

In 2013, the average income for households with married couples was more than double that of households led by women with no spouse present.

Today's panelists will discuss the implications of the Moynihan Report released 50 years ago as well as the proper policy responses. In my remarks, I will be less ambitious. I will focus on what this trend means for the school—the most important secular institution designed to help children reach our country's goal for them—that every child, as much as possible, have the opportunity to begin at the same starting line.

And in case you want to step out for coffee at this point, I can jump straight to my conclusion: the school can't come close to doing it all. And neither can the government. If we want our children to be at the same starting line, there must be a revival of interest in these children and their parents from traditional sources: the religious institutions, families, and communities.

To begin with, what is a school supposed to do anyway? Professor James Coleman is often quoted as having said that the purpose of the school is to help parents do what parents don't do as well. So what have our schools traditionally done that parents did not do as well?

In 1988, I attended a conference in Rochester at which the president of Notre Dame asked, ''What is the rationale for a public school?''—schools which 90 percent of our children attend. Albert Shanker offered this answer: ''A public school is for the purpose of teaching immigrant children reading, writing and arithmetic and what it means to be an American with the hope they'll go home and teach their parents.''

But obviously in today's world, Shanker's vision of the school does not come close to doing all the things that many parents are not able to do for their children. In a Washington Post story earlier this year, Sonya Romero-Smith, a veteran teacher at Lew Wallace Elementary School in Albuquerque, said this: ''When they first come in my door in the morning, the first thing I do is an inventory of immediate needs: Did you eat? Are you clean? A big part of my job is making them feel safe.''

The article was reporting that, for the first time in at least 50 years, more than half of public school students are eligible for the federal program that provides free or reduced-price school lunches. That means that their family's income is less than 185 percent of the federal poverty line, or below about $44,000 for a family of four. Many of them, of course, are far poorer than that.

Romero-Smith said she helps her students clean up with bathroom wipes and toothbrushes, and stocks a drawer with clean socks, underwear, pants and shoes. The job of teacher has expanded to ''counselor, therapist, doctor, parent, attorney,'' she said.

If parents are unable to meet the needs of these children, should the school try to meet those needs? If the school does not, who does?

Part of understanding the answer to that question may come from a study last year that was not unlike the Moynihan report in that the news it delivered was uncomfortable but important. This study came from the Equality of Opportunity Project, made up of economists from Harvard and Berkeley, who looked at intergenerational mobility across areas of the U.S.—how likely a child from a low-income family is to make more money as an adult than their parents did.

The researchers determined that we are, in fact, a collection of societies—some of us live in '''lands of opportunity' with high rates of [upward] mobility across generations,'' and others in places where few children raised in low-income homes escape poverty.

The researchers looked at the anonymous tax records of millions of Americans born between 1980 and 1982, measuring their income in 2011–2012, when they were roughly 30 years old. They found five key variables that seemed to explain why some places had more upward mobility than others:

The first was segregation: Areas that are more residentially segregated by race and income have lower levels of upward mobility. The second was income inequality. The third was the quality of the K–12 school system, as measured by factors like test scores and dropout rates. The fourth was social capital—rates of civic and religious involvement.

The fifth was the strongest correlation—they found that the strongest predictor of upward mobility is family structure, such as the fraction of single parents in the area. ''Parents'' marital status does not matter purely through its effects at the individual level. Children of married parents also have higher rates of upward mobility if they live in communities with fewer single parents,'' the researchers write. Put another way, if our goal is to help every child begin at the same starting line, many children raised in single parent families have a harder time getting there.

The Equality of Opportunity Project also did a second study. This one found that economic mobility has not changed much over time and is lower in the U.S. than in most developed countries.

They write: ''For example, the probability that a child reaches the top fifth of the income distribution given parents in the bottom fifth of the income distribution is 8.4%